

IN THE CLAIMS:

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-18 (cancelled)

19. (Currently amended) A surface modified powder comprising an active agent and a surface modifying material, wherein the active agent is thoroughly blended with the surface modifying material in the absence of any solvent, whereby the powder has a flowability of at most 42° in terms of an angle of repose enabling direct tableting.

20. (Previously Presented) The surface modified powder of claim 19, wherein the powder further comprises a diluent.

21. (Previously Presented) The surface modified powder of claim 19 or 20, further comprising a disintegrant.

22. (Previously Presented) The surface modified powder of claim 21, wherein the disintegrant is partly pregelatinized starch or croscopvidone.

23. (Previously Presented) The surface modified powder according to claim 19, wherein the surface modifying material is selected from agents capable of physically adhering to the active agent for surface modification thereof and contributing to improving the flowability of the active agent.

24. (Previously Presented) The surface modified powder of claim 19, wherein the surface modifying material is selected from the group consisting of light silicic anhydride, talc, stearic acid, magnesium stearate, calcium stearate, starch, titanium oxide, citric acid, malic acid, adipic acid, hydrous silicon dioxide and calcium carbonate and mixtures thereof.

25. (Previously Presented) The surface modified powder of claim 19, wherein the surface modifying material is at least one member selected from the group consisting of light silicic anhydride, talc, stearic acid, magnesium stearate and calcium stearate.

26. (Previously Presented) The surface modified powder according to claim 19, wherein the surface modifying material is light silicic anhydride.

27. (Previously Presented) The surface modified powder according to claim 26, comprising 0.1 to 5 wt% light silicic anhydride.

28. (Previously Presented) The surface modified powder of claim 20, wherein the diluent is mixed with the active agent, said diluent being selected from lactose, erythritol, trehalose, anhydrous calcium hydrogenphosphate and crystalline cellulose.

29. (Previously Presented) The surface modified powder of claim 18, wherein the active agent is combined with at least one member selected from the group consisting of finely divided titanium oxide, talc, erythritol and trehalose.

30. (Previously Presented) A method for producing a surface modified powder having a flowability of at most 42° in terms of an angle of repose enabling direct tableting, the method comprising thoroughly blending an active agent with a surface modifying material to form the surface modified powder.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the thorough blending is performed using a high speed mixer.

32. (Currently amended) The method of claim 30, wherein the high speed mixer mixed is selected from the group consisting of a device for surface modification, a high speed agitation granulator and a versatile mixer.

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33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29 further comprising adding a diluent to the surface modified powder.

34. (Previously Presented) A fast disintegrating tablet comprising a mixture of the surface modified powder of claim 19 and a disintegrant.

35. (Previously Presented) The fast disintegrating tablet according to claim 34, wherein the disintegrant is partly pregelatinized starch or crospovidone.

36. (Previously Presented) The fast disintegrating tablet according to claim 35, comprising 10 to 60 wt% partly pregelatinized starch or crospovidone.

37. (Currently amended) A method for producing a fast disintegrating tablet, the method comprising thoroughly blending an active agent with a surface modifying material in the absence of a solvent to form the surface modified powder having a flowability of at most 42° in terms of an angle of repose enabling direct tableting, and blending the surface modified powder with a disintegrant, followed by direct tableting.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 36, wherein a diluent is further blended to the surface modified powder.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37, wherein blending is performed using a high speed mixer.

40. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 37, wherein before or after the blending at least one member selected from the group consisting of finely divided titanium oxide, talc, erythritol and trehalose, is further added.

41. (Previously Presented) A method for producing a tablet preparation, which

comprises subjecting the surface modified powder of claim 19 to direct tableting,

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 41 further comprising a step of blending the powder with an additive selected from the group consisting of binders, acids, foaming agents, artificial sweeteners, flavorings, lubricants, and colorants.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37, wherein the disintegrant is selected from the group consisting of partly pregelatinized starch, crospovidone, crystalline, cellulose-carmellose sodium, low substituted hydroxyl-propyl cellulose, starch, corn starch, potato starch, carmellose, carmellose calcium, carmellose sodium, croscarmellose sodium, carbozylmethylstarch sodium.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37, wherein the disintegrant is partly pregelatinized starch or crospovidone.

45. (Previously Presented) The surface modified powder of claim 20, wherein the diluent is selected from the group consisting of lactose, anhydrous calcium hydrogenphosphate, crystalline cellulose, sucrose, D-mannitol, low substituted hydroxypropyl cellulose, xylitol, erythritol, trehalose, and aspartame or combinations thereof.

46. (Previously Presented) The surface modified powder of claim 20, where no diluent is present.